
# Nebraska State Accountability

## Grade 7

## Reading

## Mini-Test

Name:

*Nebraska Department of Education 2009*

## Directions:

On the following page is a passage and multiple-choice questions for Grade 7 Reading Mini-Test, a practice opportunity for the *Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA).*

Each question will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For all questions:

- Read the passage. Then answer each question carefully by choosing the best answer.
- Mark your answers for ALL of the questions.

Remember only one of the choices provided is the correct answer.

**READING SESSION 1**

## A Man with a Dream

In 1811, a young man named Samuel Morse arrived in London, England, to study art. He wrote to his mother in Charlestown, Massachusetts, to tell her of his safe arrival. Morse was troubled because it would take four long weeks for the letter to reach her. Could this have been when he first began to dream of a way to send words flying across land and sea?

When he was very young, Morse had entered Yale University. He became interested in lectures and experiments having to do with electricity. However, he also showed great talent for art. He earned money for college by selling his small paintings for five dollars each. Then he went to England to study art, returning from England to the United States in 1815. He continued to paint for several more years but made barely enough money to live.

A friend was giving lectures on electricity at Columbia College in New York. Morse attended the lectures. His interest in electricity returned. Another time, he heard some scientists discussing new discoveries in electricity. One said that electricity could travel directly along a length of wire several miles long. Someone asked if the flow of electricity was slowed down by the length of wire. The scientist answered no. Samuel Morse's mind was filled with ideas. What if he could build a device to send a message instantly along a wire of any length? What if the wire reached across the United States? What if it went around Earth?

In 1835, Morse became professor of art at New York University. He also began work on a communication device. He developed a code–a combination of dots (short tones) and dashes (long tones)–for each letter of the alphabet. The codes would be sent from a transmitter through a length of wire to a receiver. A magnet on the receiver would move a marker on a strip of paper, writing out the coded message. An example of the now world-famous Morse code is the signal for distress: dot dot dot (S) dash dash dash (O) dot dot dot (S).

By 1837, Morse was ready to send his first message. He ran a 1,700-foot length of copper wire, almost the length of six football fields, around his workroom. Tapping a switch-like device called a key, he sent a message from the **transmitter** to the receiver. The experiment was a success. Morse named his device a "telegraph," after the Greek word meaning "to write far." He demonstrated the telegraph in 1838, at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. In 1844, Morse and some partners began construction of a forty-mile line of wire between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. In May 1844, it was time for the ultimate test. Morse set up the telegraph at the Supreme Court Building in Washington. He keyed a message over the forty-mile line to an associate in Baltimore. The associate received the message instantly and returned it instantly.

By 1851, there were fifty telegraph companies operating in the United States. Thirteen telegraph companies joined together in 1856 and become known as Western Union. In 1861, Western Union built the first transcontinental telegraph line. Since Morse's death in 1872, great improvements in communication technology have been made based on his invention.

**READING SESSION 1**

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Today a variation of the Morse code makes it possible for individuals with physical challenges to communicate. This computer-accessible, alternative communication method, called "Morse 2000," can be used by those who are paralyzed or cannot speak. Like the original Morse code, Morse 2000 is a series of signals. A person can blink an eye, push or pull, puff, or make other movements to work the program. Special software causes the computer to respond as if the person were typing on a keyboard. The computer converts the Morse movements into text and graphics. Dr. Thomas W. King, director of the Morse 2000 Outreach program at the University of Wisconsin, reports that the program is easier to learn than sign language. Dr. King believes that Morse 2000 may become the "manual language for the next millennium."

It all began with one man's determination and hard work. Years of living on very little money and without support did not discourage Samuel Morse. He worked until he made his dream come true.

1. What organizational pattern did the author use to structure the passage?

   A. compare and contrast

   B. order of importance

   C. chronological order

   D. cause and effect

2. In paragraph 5, what context clue helps you determine the meaning of the word **transmitter**?

   A. to write far

   B. device called a key

   C. length of six football fields

   D. sent a message

3. What connection does the author suggest Morse made while hearing the lecture on electricity?

   A. An electrical invention could help people communicate more quickly with one another.

   B. An electrical invention could help him earn money to afford college.

   C. An electrical invention could help him start a new communications company.

   D. An electrical invention could allow him to develop a new artistic style.

4. What is the meaning of the prefix trans- in the word **transcontinental**?

   A. across

   B. from

   C. between

   D. beside

5. Why is the Morse 2000 system easier to use than sign language?

   A. It can be used by a person in a wheelchair.

   B. It takes 2000 symbols to communicate the message.

   C. It takes fewer blinks to communicate with others.

   D. It can be used by people with different disabilities.

6. What is the main idea of the passage *A Man with a Dream*?

   A. how the invention of a creator came to his mind

   B. how the need to invent was an important factor

   C. how the Morse Code was invented and used

   D. how the Morse Code has helped handicapped individuals

7. What is one of the author’s themes in the passage?

   A. A person's hope to be successful makes a person wealthy.

   B. A person's dream is made possible by hard work and determination.

   C. A person's ability determines a person's career choice.

   D. A person's desire helps disabled people overcome obstacles.

## Grade 7 Mini-Test Answers

1. C. chronological order
2. D. sent a message
3. A. An electrical invention could help people communicate more quickly with one another.
4. A. across
5. D. It can be used by people with different disabilities.
6. C. how the Morse Code was invented and used
7. B. A person's dream is made possible by hard work and determination.